

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 06165 042001Z

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SNM-02 SSO-00 CPR-01 SCA-01

DEAE-00 JUSE-00 PRS-01 INR-07 INRE-00 /022 W

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FM AMAMBASSY LA PAZ

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LAIPAZ 6165

E.O. 11652: GJS

TAGS: SNAR, BL

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS COOPERATION INITIATIVE: COCAINE CONSPIRACY
CASE

REF: STATE 192021

1. I CALLED ON MINISTER OF INTERIOR AT 11 A.M. AUGUST 4
IN ACCORDANCE WITH REFTEL TO BRIEF HIM ON THE CASE, DESCRIBE
THE DEFENDANTS AND SOMETHING OF THE EVIDENCE AGAINST THEM.
I SHOULD NOTE THAT LA PRESENCIA NEWSPAPER OF AUGUST 4
CARRIES A WIRE SERVICE STORY (AFP) FROM WASHINGTON ABOUT
A PRESS CONFERENCE HELD BY THE US ATTORNEY AND THE DEA AGENT IN
CHARGE OF THE CASE. THE NAMES OF THE DEFENDANTS AND THE
NATURE OF THE CASE WERE REPORTED IN SOME DETAIL IN THAT
STORY . ACCORDINGLY, THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR WAS ALREADY
REASONABLY WELL INFORMED. FURTHERMORE, HE HAD A BRIEF
CABLE FROM IAMBASSADOR CRESPO PROVIDING DETAILS BASED ON
HIS BRIEFING IN THE DEPARTMENT.

2. THE MINISTER INVITED TO JOIN US, COLONEL APARACIO, HEAD
OF THE BOLIVIAN NARCOTICS BUREAU, AND AFTER A SHORT DISCUSSION
OF A COPY OF THE INDICTMENT WHICH I HANDED THEM, THE
MINISTER ORDERED THE ARREST OF EVERY BOLIVIAN CHARGED
IN THE INDICTMENT WHO COULD BE LOCATED IN BOLIVIA. HE
ALSO TELEPHONED THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO REQUEST THE LIFTING
OF DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY FOR JAIME OBLITAS. I GATHERED FROM
LISTENING TO THE CONVERSATION THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL
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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 06165 042001Z

IMMEDIATELY INVESTIGATE THE BASIS UPON WHICH HIS ACTION WILL BE TAKEN. THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR ALSO INSTRUCTED THE LEGAL ADVISER OF HIS MINISTRY TO PREPARE PROMPTLY A MEMO FOR HIM OUTLINING THE PROCEDURES FOR EXTRADITING THE BOLIVIAN DEFENDANTS IN BOLIVIA TO THE US OR THE MEANS OF PROSECUTING THEM LOCALLY UNDER BOLIVIAN LAW.

3. I TOLD MINISTER OF INTERIOR AND COLONEL APARACIO THAT A TEAM IS EXPECTED IN LA PAZ WITHIN TWO OR THREE WEEKS TO DISCUSS SPECIFICALLY THE EVIDENCE THE US HAS THAT COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE GOB IN PROCEEDING AGAINST THE DEFENDANTS IN BOLIVIA. THE MINISTER EXPRESSAD GREAT PLEASURE WITH THIS INFORMATION AND ASKED THAT THE TEAM COME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND HAVE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS IT COULD TRANSLATED TO SPANISH.

4. THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR WAS SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT THE NEWS THAT THE US ATTORNEY AND THE DEA AGENT IN CHARGE OF THE CASE HAD HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE AND HAD REVEALED DETAILS OF THE CASE AND NAMES OF THE INDIVIDUALS CHARGED. THE MINISTER SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE PUBLIC NATURE OF AN UNSEALED INDICTMENT BUT FELT THAT THE PUBLICITY PROVIDED BY THE US AUTHORITIES WAS EXCESSIVE AND WILL COMPLICATE HIS STEPS IN LOCATING AND ARRESTING THE BOLIVIAN DEFENDANTS IN BOLIVIA. HE ASKED ME TO REQUEST US AUTHORITIES TO REFRAIN FROM ANY FURTHER PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE CASE WHICH, IF OCCUR, HE BELIEVES MAY COMPLICATE THE BOLIVIAN LEGAL PROCESSES.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF AT ALL POSSIBLE THAT I COULD BE ASSURED THAT US AUTHORITIES WILL INDEED REFRAIN FROM GIVING ANY FURTHER PUBLICITY TO THE CASE AND THAT THE US TEAM WILL PROCEED TO LA PAZ AS PROMPTLY AS POSSIBLE.

6. COMMENT: I TRUST THAT US AUTHORITIES APPRECIATE FROM THE PROMPT AND DECISIVE MANNER IN WHICH THE GOB IS PROCEEDING THAT IT IS SERIOUS ABOUT COOPERATING WITH US ON TRAFFICKING CASES WHEREIN THE INFORMATION IS SOLID AND IS MADE AVAILABLE IN USABLE FORM TO THE GOB.
STEDMAN

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, NARCOTICS, POLICE INVESTIGATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976LAPAZ06165
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: D760300-0924
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760899/aaaaglcj.tel
Line Count: 104
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION L
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 STATE 192021
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUL 2004 by ellisoob>; APPROVED <25 OCT 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> wfs 970930
Subject: NARCOTICS COOPERATION INITIATIVE: COCAINE CONSPIRACY CASE
TAGS: SNAR, BL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006